

Duties of Board President and Vice President

The President must be a strong leader with a vision for the community and a commitment to open-mindedness and fairness. He or she must be a positive role model for the rest of the Board Members and provide them with the motivation to work for the betterment of the co-op.

The President heads a board of volunteer directors and, as such, he or she:

- ensures that directors and committees are meeting their assignments and goals in order to run a successful and harmonious co-op. While the President's power is defined in the bylaws and policies, his or her real power comes from the strength of the personal relationships he or she forms with board and co-op members.
- presides at all meetings of the board and of the membership. The President develops the agenda for meetings and passes it along to the Secretary for distribution to the rest of the board and/or the membership. May ask the Vice President to preside when unable, and also to provide experience in managing meetings.
- chairs the meetings, by calling them to order, running them, ensuring that the agenda is followed, limiting discussion to what is essential, according to policies and procedures developed by the board.
- ensures that the *Ground Rules for Participation* are followed at every meeting. This function is vital and requires willingness to interrupt side conversations and redirect them.
- is responsible for the general administration of the guidelines established by the board and the membership. The President performs such duties prescribed by the board or as are necessary to accomplish the objectives of the cooperative.
- acts as one of the signing directors for the co-op on legal documents and contracts, and typically represents the co-op to vendors, members and the community-at-large.

Most important, an effective president facilitates the process of creating a shared vision for the community, setting goals and an action plan to carry out the wishes and needs of the members. He or she must identify and prioritize the co-op's most urgent needs and work to ensure that these needs are met.

Vice President

The Vice President presides at all meetings in the absence of the President or at the President's request. He or she performs duties delegated by either the board or the President. The Vice President reports on the activities of the President to the board in the absence of the President. Typically, the Vice President is often learning the job so that he or she is trained and ready to assume the Presidency at the next election. Sometimes, the Vice-President will head one of the committees.